

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 1. A method of providing a customer incentive program comprising the
2 steps of:
3 creating accounts for customers;
4 collecting information pertaining to purchasing transactions made by the
5 customers with sellers using their respective accounts;
6 awarding equity interests in the sellers to the customers based at least in part
7 on the collected information;
8 aggregating the equity awards into one or more aggregate blocks, the
9 aggregate blocks including awards for different customer accounts; and
10 acquiring the equity for the equity awards based on the aggregate blocks.

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1 2. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the purchasing transactions
2 include purchases of goods or services using the Internet.

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1 3. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of creating accounts
2 is performed using the Internet.

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1 4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of collecting
2 information is performed using the Internet.

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1 5. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the step of awarding equity
2 interests to the customers further comprises:

3 determining values associated with the purchasing transactions of each
4 customer using his account; and
5 awarding an equity interest to each customer in an amount based on the
6 value.

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1 6. A method as recited in any of claim 2, wherein the step of awarding
2 equity interests to the customers further comprises:

3 determining values associated with the purchasing transactions of each
4 customer using his account; and

5 awarding an equity interest to each customer in an amount based on the
6 value.

1 7. A method as recited in any of claim 3, wherein the step of awarding
2 equity interests to the customers further comprises:

3 determining values associated with the purchasing transactions of each
4 customer using his account; and

5 awarding an equity interest to each customer in an amount based on the
6 value.

1 8. A method as recited in any of claim 4, wherein the step of awarding
2 equity interests to the customers further comprises:

3 determining values associated with the purchasing transactions of each
4 customer using his account; and

5 awarding an equity interest to each customer in an amount based on the
6 value.

1 9. A system for providing a customer incentive program comprising:

2 means for creating accounts for customers;

3 means for collecting information pertaining to purchasing transactions made
4 by the customers with sellers using their respective accounts;

5 means for awarding equity interests in the sellers to the customers based at
6 least in part on the collected information;

7 means for aggregating the equity awards into one or more aggregate blocks,
8 the aggregate blocks including awards for different customer accounts; and

9 means for acquiring the equity for the equity awards based on the aggregate
10 blocks.

1 10. A system as recited in claim 9, wherein the purchasing transactions
2 include purchases of goods or services using the Internet.